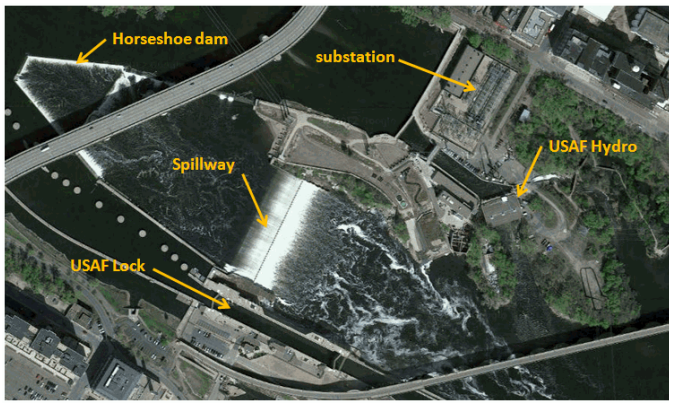
US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District

Information Paper

Miscellaneous: Hydropower, USAF, Minneapolis, Minnesota



Hydropower project at Upper St. Anthony Falls Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Contact

Nanette Bischoff, Project Manager, FERC Coordinator
(651) 290-5426 (651) 290-5258 (fax)
nanette.m.bischoff@usace.army.mil

Location/Description

Northern States Power Company (aka Xcel Energy) holds Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license number 2056, granting it the authority to operate the hydropower facility located at Upper St. Anthony Falls in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The hydropower facility includes a transition wall extending from the Corps' lock structure; a horseshoe dam, spillway and roll dam located across the river and several earthen and concrete dams at various locations to control water flows; a main powerhouse on Hennepin Island; two underground transmission lines connected to the Main Street substation; and several abandoned hydropower structures still listed on the license. The powerhouse includes five turbines with a total capacity of 12.4 megawatts, which is enough to provide power to 10,800 households.

Background

The original hydropower license was granted on Sept. 6, 1951. It included a 16-megawatt lower development hydropower facility at Lower St. Anthony Falls. In 1956, a 12.4-megawatt upper development hydropower facility at Upper St. Anthony Falls was added to the license. In 1987, the lower development hydropower plant failed and has since been removed from the license. The license was reissued on March 8, 2004, for a period of 30 years and only includes the 12.4-megawatt upper development.

In December 2003, FERC, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Officer signed a programmatic agreement for managing the historic properties affected by the hydropower license.

Status

The hydropower facility continues to be owned and operated by Northern States Power. FERC conducts yearly safety inspections, sometimes requiring drawdown of the intermediate pool between the upper and lower dams to inspect the tailrace area.

The licensee is working with FERC, the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Officer, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and others on the aesthetic flow plan to determine the minimum flows over the main spillway.

Pertinent correspondence and filings are posted on the FERC eLibrary (http://elibrary.ferc.gov) under docket number P-2056.

Authority

Licensing of hydropower facilities by the FERC is governed by Part I of the Federal Power Act, 16 USC 791(a) – 825(r). Licensing at Corps of Engineers facilities is also governed by a 1981 memorandum of understanding between FERC and the Department of the Army.

Fiscal

A fixed amount, generally $7,000 per year, is funded under the "Investigations" account for FERC-related administrative activities and permit review. Activities such as pre-licensing, coordination during construction and re-licensing are funded under the operation and maintenance program, and these costs are reimbursed by the licensee to the U.S. Treasury through annual charges by FERC.